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THE CHURCH OF CHRIST,

IN HISTORY NO. 7.

IN treating of Evangelists, we called attention to most of the Scriptures bearing upon the subject, with the view, of presenting as correct a history as possible, of a true minister of the Gospel. We consider it proper next, to invite special attention, to a few of the most obvious conclusions which may be drawn from the authority submitted.

In the first place, we think, it cannot be doubted that, it is the privilege and duty of every member of the body of Christ, to teach, exhort and labor to the utmost of his ability, to advance the interests of the cause of the Savior. All the servants of God are styled by the Spirit, "Kings" and "Priests," and as "Living Stones" in the spiritual edifice, are by birth right, and their position in the body, fully authorized to "offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." The service was required of all, and hence, the disciples of Troas, "Came together on the first day of the week to break bread." Ac. 20, 7. Paul exhorted the Hebrews, "Not to forsake the assembling of themselves together, but to exhort one another, to love and to good works." To the Roman brethren, he said, "Ye are full of all goodness

and knowledge—able to admonish one another." We have also noticed that, when the thousands of God's people were driven by persecution from Jerusalem, "they went everywhere, preaching the word." Through their influence mainly, the cause spread throughout the country of Palestine. Hence, the "Body, by union with the Head, by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increased with the increase of God." Col. 2, 19. In this manner, "Was sounded out the Word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia," but in the various countries, the faith was spread abroad. 1 Thes. 1, 8.

Secondly, There can be no question that, the truth was spread abroad in all lands, through the labors of the churches of the saints. As disciples of Christ, as christians, as members of the one family of God on earth, it was the duty of each and all, to exert all the power of the body in spreading the light of truth. In our sketches of the history of the Jews, in our First Volume, we were particular in specifying that, the members of one of the twelve tribes, were set apart to teach and direct the worship. None but the members of the family of Levi, were permitted to sacrifice on the altars, or attend to the sacred rites. They were the priests, teachers, rulers and superiors in all the departments of the national administration. But a better order was promised. Some six hundred years before Christ, God said, "I will make a new covenant," with the people, "I will put my laws in their inward parts and write them in their hearts; and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall know me from the least of them, unto the greatest of them." Jer. 31, 33. In the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, "All, from the least to the greatest, are to know the Lord." No one has a right to say to the saints, "This is the way, walk ye in it." All are to know for themselves, so perfectly, that inspired teachers to sound new truth in their ears, are not necessary. Furthermore, all are to teach, exhort; instruct, admonish, encourage and spread the light of truth, according to the ability of each.

We showed, in the third place, that certain members, in the primitive churches, from various influences, became more intelligent, more active and more successful in the cause of truth than others, that members were not equal in their growth in grace. Some were slow in passing their state of childhood, while others soon became masters of every department of spiritual service,

Phillip, for instance, was first known at Jerusalem as a Grecian Jew, only qualified to distribute bread to the widows of his country; but by persevering in his acquisitions and his rapid growth in the knowledge of the truth, we find him in a few years, a noted "Evangelist, in Cesarea, with four daughters, who did prophecy." Not only did Phillip rise to the position of Evangelist, but he enabled his daughters to become efficient teachers. Ac. 21, 8-9.

We think the Scriptures, we have examined, show very clearly, that the members of the church, "Grow up into their Head, in all things." Eph. 4, 13. They grow into their active positions

In the fourth place, we concluded that, if the members, "grow" into useful lives, the modern practice, of the denominations, in making preachers, officers, etc., by elections, ordinations or otherwise, is without divine authority. For more than a third of a century, we have doubted the authority of the practice, of making preachers—Evangelists, Pastors, Shepherds, Elders, Bishops, Deacons, and the like, by the ceremonies employed in the churches, such as elections and imaginary ordinations. We have also, very fully shown that, the designations of the most efficient members of the church, arose in ancient times, from the peculiar labors performed by each. Phiilip was an Evangelist, in consequence of the character of the labor he performed. His daughters, proph esied, and were justly entitled to the distinction of such names, as their labors indicated. John was, "The Baptist, because he baptized, and if he had sprinkled, he would have been called the "Sprinkler," as certainly as Simon was called, "The Tanner," because of the nature of his work. Simon and his Brothers were fishermen, but afterwards, their employment gave them other designations. Simon, in fact, from his uniform firmness. was called, "Rock," just as Herod was pronounced by the Savior, "That fox." Inasmuch as our course of studies, has led us to doubt the truth of elections, and ordinations in the denominational sense, of making church servants, we wish to state clearly, the doctrine to which we really object, and our reasons, at least in part for so doing.

We have already mentioned, apostles, messengers, elders, bishops, pastors, deacons, and others, as members of the church of Christ; but as the designations are now employed, in the various church orders, we have been led to doubt, the truth of all official authority in the church, and especially, do we distrust the authority of modern bishops, elders, deacons, preacheas and others

claiming spiritual commissions. The episcopacy of the Romish and Protestant churches, we consider an assumption, and being very confident, the churches of the present age, generally, if not universally, hold substantially the same views, we are free, to pronounce the whole doctrine of the prelacy, the entire episcopacy or official authority of the age, the grossest userpation. Let us look at it.

The system as stated by Mr. A. Jacob, D. D., a distinguished teacher in the church of England, in his treatise on "Church Polity," a very learned work recently published, runs as follows; viz: "That all men who have a right to be considered ministers of Christ, have received a commission from Him, in a direct line from the Apostles, through ordaining priests, by virtue of which they alone have the right to administer the christian ordinances; so that there can be no true church. and no validity in the ordinances, except where there are ministers duly ordained." p. 418, 419. He says again that, the system assumes, "A mysterious power, is transmitted through an unbroken chain of ordinations, to make men christian ministers." p. 364. In the "Canons of the Holy Apostles," as set forth by the church of Rome, it is said, "The sacred offices are conferred by the laying on of the hands of the bishops, who are the keepers of the Word, the mediators between God and the people, in the several parts of divine worship." It is by virtue of this mysterious authority, Roman officials profess to have the keys of the kingdom of heaven, or the authority to open and shut the doors of the kingdom at will.

In the Presbyterian Confessions of faith, all of them—chapter xxxi it is said, "The Lord Jesus, as King and Head of his church hath therein, appointed a government, in the hands of church officers. To these officers, the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed, by virtue whereof they have power respectfully to remit and retain sins, to shut the kingdom against the impenitent and open it unto the penitent by the ministry of the gospel and by absolution from censures as occasion shall require."

In the Methodist churches, the authority to govern and attend to the ordinances, is professedly conferred by the laying on of the hands of the bishops. In the discipline the formula runs, "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work now conferred by the laying on of our hands." A similar view is taken of the subject of ordaining officers for religious service, in all the Baptist parties in our knowledge. Hence, the ministers of these respective sects, consider no one authorized to minister the Supper, or bap-

tism unless regularly ordained by officials of Baptist orders. These things lie upon the very surface of the denominations. The assumption of official authority indeed, seems to have found firm footing, even amongst the disciples of Christ, who profess to take the Bible alone as the only rule of action. Many amongst us maintain the authority of ordination, to office, with a tenacity which differs not essentially from the respective denominations. The brethren, either mean to say, the right to preach, and administer the ordinances, is conferred by what they call ordination, or it is not. If Christians, as such, are not fully ordained from above, to study the word of life; to teach it to others, to meet with each other as the children of God—exhort, break bread, baptize, sing and pray together, as the servants of God, and in a word, to attend to all the service of the Lord, it should be clearly shown from the Scriptures. We notice that, distinguished preachers, travel hundreds of miles to ordain men to office, and we need only say, it is either scriptural or it is not. If it is requisite, or is necessary in one church, it is necessary in every church. If it is not positively required, it is one of the most dangerous phases of popery.

We are quite free to say, that, while we desire to humbly bow our neck, in all circumstances to the yoke of our Beloved Master, we are candid to admit, that, we have not the least respect for the hierarchy of Rome, Protestantism or others. It rose gradually from wilful and ignorant departures from the order of the New Testament, and while it prevails in the world, the christian Institution will find in it the most dangerous enemy. These proud officials, profess to stand as mediators between God and his people, and all the grace of the blessed religion of Christ, is suspended upon their mystic touch. We regard it becoming and necessary to give briefly in plain contrast, what we consider

THE NEW TESTAMENT, "CHURCH POLITY,"

In the performance of this labor, we should, in the first place endeavor, to free ourselves from the bewildering influence, as the Savior says, of "The Princes of the Gentiles." It has always been most difficult for the people of God, to act independently of

surrounding nations. In the days of Samuel 1120 years before Christ, the people wished, "To be as the nations," and asked for an officer—a king—to go before them and fight their battles for them." While their request was granted, the step was most fatal. In following the wisdom of the nations, they rejected God as their King. Israel, was never restored to the service of the Father. The Jews are still in a furnace. The Savior said to his disciples, "You know that the princes of the Gentiles, (nations) exercise dominion over them; and they that are great, exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister," or "Whosoever desires to be first among you, let him be your (doulos) servant." Even as the Son came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and give his life a ransom for many." Mat. 21, 25–18. From the beginning, it has been difficult for christians to resist the influence of the surrounding world. The creeds, customs and fashions of the people of the world, can but exercise a bewitching influence, unless we keep our eye, steadfastly upon "the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." While the saints were persecuted and humble, they grew in grace, but no sooner was the church taken under the direction of the Roman emperor, than was her apostacy sealed, and the hierarchy, which we are combatting, was fully inaugurated. The only hope is to turn from the wisdom of the world, and to be governed in all our religious conclusions by the Spirit of our God. In the present age we find our most wily foe in

THE TRADITIONS OF THE APOSTACY.

We have inherited from our fathers the nomenclature, of Babylon, to such a degree that, we cannot well understand each other; and we are in no condition, to comprehend fully the language of Canaan. While it has been impossible to conceal the whole truth, by a Babylonish translation of the scriptures. we have been brought up under the influence of a version, which to say the least, has come to us, with many features of the beast, and the

false prophet, standing prominent on its pages. While we hope to write nothing, calculated in the slightest degree to weaken confidence in the Sacred Oracles, we are fully satisfied that, there is scarcely an important subject, which has not reached us, veiled and mutilated. Instead of the servants of Jesus Christ, being known by names significant of their labor and true character, we haveto encounter a sea of troubles, in reference, not only tothe ministers of the Gospel, but in regard to all the prominent actors in the household of the faithful, and even touching the form of Christian Government set forth in the Bible. Regarding the Evangelist, we have possibly indicated, with sufficient clearness, what we think is his true character, to enable the reader to the better satisfy himself by a closer examination of the word of life. While we are aware that, some of our statements regarding official government in the church, may seem somewhat novel to many of our readers, and being anxious to furnish sufficient reasons, for our conclusions, we deem it proper, to consider well, both sides of every question bearing upon the subject. We therefore, invite attention next, to the

THE CHRISTIAN ELDERSHIP.

There are, at least, two important questions involved.

Who are Scriptural Elders?

What work is required of them?

Although no one need affirm with mathematical certainty, that he knows the Bible is true, all christians rejoice in the belief that. the writings in hoth Testaments, are the word of God; and what is contained in the Divine Volume, forms our boundary of Spiritual intelligence. Angels, may perhaps, possess greater light, but mortals of earth, need nothing beyond, and in the present sphere, could not appreciate higher developments. Still, all should be so familiar with the Scriptures, as to be able to affirm that, they know what they teach. We gravely ask,

WHAT DOES THE WORD ELDER MEAN?

Gramatically considered, the word Elder, is the comparative of old, and necessarily, means older, usually written elder, Thus it is correct, to speak of old, older, and oldest, with reference to men, or other living creatures; and we are pleased to think, that no person of intelligence, questions for a moment, the meaning of these very familiar words.

The Hebrew verb, Zah-kehn,—Preterite, tense, in the Old Testament, is used 24 times, to denote old, as old man, old prophet, etc. In the future tense, it is used three times, "waxed old," or to grow old. The adjective Zah-kehn, is employed 40 times to denote old—old as applied to any animal or object. It is translated eldest, once. It is Elder, 105 times, in the Old Testament. It is rendered, Ancient, or ancients, 13 times; aged, 3 times; Senators, once; and old women, once. We read of the "Elders of Israel,""Elders of the City,"of Gilead–"elders of the congregation," —"the people,"—of "Jezreel,"—"of Judah,"—"of the priests," —"of the land,"—of the "daughter of Zion,"—"ancients of Gebal,"—"of Moab,"—"of Midian." etc. etc.

There can be no doubt as to the meaning, of Elder in all these varied applications, and yet,we see nothing indicaiting an official signification. No one, tobesure, doubts that old men and women, the aged, senators, and ancients, in olden times, were presumed worthy of respect and honor. In the law of Moses the people were cammanded, "To rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man." Lev. 19, 32. In the New Testament, "old men," or Elders, are to be regarded as "Fathers. and young men, as brothers." Tim. 5, 6. In all ages, and amongst all cultivated people, the aged, or elder persons. other things being equal, have been entitled to high regard, and often to deep veneration. In Greek, the word translated elder, is Presbuteros, and is found in the New Testament, 67 times. It is the comparative of Presbus, and is rendered, generally Elder, or Elders. Hence we have "the tradition of the Elders." "Things of the Elders," "Elders of the people," "Scribes and Elders," "Elders of the Jews," "Elder Son," "Beginning at the Eldest." "Old men, shall dream dreams," "Rulers and Elders," "Elders of Israel," "Elders in

every church," "Elder women," "Elders obtained a good report," "The Elder," and various other forms are employed.

Presbuteros, is translated, old man. Lu. 1, 18; "aged men," Titus 2, 2; and the "aged" as Paul the aged. Phil. 9. Presbutis, is but once found—rendered, "aged women." The word Presbaia, is translated ambassage, Lu. 14, 32, and message, 19, 14. We have the word Presbeuomen, once, in our Scriptures, translated, "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ." 2 Cor. 5, 20. It is rendered here as a noun, whereas, it is a participle, for the equivalent of which in meaning, we have no English word. The nearest we can approach it, is, "We are performing ambassages for Christ," or, "We are bearing messages of peace, to the world in the name of the Lord."

Finally, we have in Greek, the word Presbuterion, to denote an assembly of older persons. The first occurrence is in Lu. 22, 66, "The elders of the people, the chief priests, and, scribes came together." The reference here, is to the Jews, whose age and other qualities, had given them prominence. It is said, the reference was to a "Jewish court, or council, called the Sanhedrim; but this is mere conjecture, the aged are expected to be wise; and hence, they are always appealed to, for advice and instruction.

We read of "All the estate of the Elders," Ac. 22, 5. The words were spoken by Paul, from the steps of the castle, at Jerusalem, in the Hebrew tongue, and in our Greek of the passage, there is no word for "estate," but the verse may be translated, "I persecuted this way unto death, and the high priest doth bear me witness, (*Kai pan* to Presbuterion,) and all the force, company, or assemblage, of the Eldership," The word is but once applied to the Eldership of christians. Paul said to Timothy, "Neglect not the gift in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, in laying on the hands of the presbytery." 1 Tim. 4, 14. The reference is merely, to the act of the elders, or seniors or the older Jews. If we mistake not we have now shown the meaning of the word under consideration as used in Hebrew, Greek, and English, and the signification seems, in every instance to be, Elder—to refer to the aged, or older persons. That older men, or seniors, had special work to perform, we have not doubted; but whether the word ever signified an officer, or that any one was entitled to his eldership, by investiture, is the question. That any elder, was necessarily an officer, we have failed to discover. We think there is no proof. We will next examine,

THE WORD ELDER AS APPLIED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

We will first notice passages, in reference to the meaning of which, we think, there can be no doubt. Paul to Tim. 5, 1 said, "Rebuke not an Elder, but entreat him as a father," and the younger men as brethren. The older women as mothers, and the younger, as sisters, with all purity." In these verses, it must be seen that, Paul alluded to the characteristics, or qualities given by age and experience. The Older men, were to be treated as fathers, and the older women, as mothers. This is a sentiment deeply implanted in the human heart, and has existed amongst all people and in all time. If there is a good natural impulse of the soul, it is that, which prompts younger persons to look up to parents, and elders, for advice and assistance. Hence, in the Jewish, as well as in the Christian religion, the sentiment of regard for the aged, was inculcated. In all well ordered families, the seniors are the natural guardians of the younger members; and hence, the necessity of the older persons in every family acting in such a manner, as to command the esteem and love of the younger members.

The Apostle—with the keys—wrote, "The elders who are among you, I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ; "Feed the flock of God, which is among you, taking the oversight, not by constraint; but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise ye younger submit yourselves unto the elder, Yea, all of you, be subject one to another.', 1 Pet. 5; 1-5. It may be well, to examine this passage with care. What are the distinctive points in it?

1. Peter in calling himself an Elder applies the word to others in the plural, to designate merely aged persons.

4. He uses the word Younger in plain comparison with Elder, as denoting younger persons.

3. From the simple fact, some were older than others, the younger members were exhorted to "submit to" or place themselves under the Seniors. Another thought in this connection is,

that all are to be subject one to another. While Sir Isaac Newton demonstrated that, the Sun is the great central attractive force in the physical world, he also proved that, every other body, from the least to the greatest, attracts others with a force in proportion to the quantity of matter and distances from the centre of each. While, therefore, the seniors in the congregations, are set forth and ordained of Heaven; as the rulers and governors of the yonnger members, even the latter, are to exert an influence on their superiors in proportion to their natural and acquired force of character.

4. From the fact that, Christ is here denominated, "The chief Shepherd," it is clear that, the Elders are the divinely appointed, inferior shepherds. They are the living and active shepherds, or pastors, over all the flocks of the Masters Sheepfold. Hence, the idea of stripling pastors, as shepherds over the Lord's sheep, is but solemn mockery of the Father's purposes. While novices, may be useful, they cannot be pastors, or rulers over the aged members of the spiritual honsehold.

5. The business of these pastors, was to feed the flock of God *among them, not by constraint, but willingly; not for earthly gain, but from a cheerful mind; not as lords over the people, but as examples to the flock."

6. Were these seniors, officers, in the sense of having had authority given by any church ceremony, as a qualification for performing the service? If we say that, Peter was an official Elder, we must also conclude that, he had been inducted into this and divers other official positions which he occupied. But the idea of induction, by ceremonies into offices, as Apostle, Evangelist, Deacon, Elder, Pastor, Overseer, etc.? is certainly foreign to the Bible, and, yet, Peter was an Apostle, evangelist, bishop, eldest, deacon, and servant. Possibly he was entitled to every title indicative of valuable labor in the cause of Christ.

7. We conclude that, the experienced, aged and wise members of the church, were the regular shepherds. pastors, feeders, teachers, rulers, bishops, and superintendents of the sheep amongst them.

Finally, we must refer to John, "The beloved disciple," who styles himself, "The Elder," in writing to the "Elect lady and her children." We presume, no one will maintain that, he had reference to any official power, or honor with which he had been clothed by officials at home, or from a distance as a qualification

for any christian service. Again, in addressing his third epistle to his friend, Gaius, he styles himself, "The Elder." He was merely stating, what was really true, in regard to himself. He was a venerable man of God, whose right it was, to address others as his children, and himself as their senior and father, especially in the Gospel.

We are told, that it is freely admitted, the word, "Elder, in Hebrew, Greek and English, denotes an older person; and that, in the passages of scripture we have recited, the literal meaning prevails, but in other passages, the word has a very different signification." We are, in fact told that, "The official signification, differs widely from the latter meaning." In all the Hermeneutical canons from Ernesti to our youngest scribes, we have found no eminent scholar, who would take the responsibility to assert that, literal and figurative meanings of any word, could be contradictory. Richard Whately, said that, Figurative meanings, are to be explained by the literal. If words are really the signs of ideas, the branch meanings, must always conform to the root ideas of words. No form of the word, to Sprinkle, for illustration, can mean, to dip; and *viec versa.* All confidence in critical rules, and really, in language, is lost when we attempt to make. Presbuteros, denote in one passage, an older person than another, and in another, something widely different. But we will cheerfully hear all that can be said, and consequently, we are ready to examine,

THE SCRIPTURES. WHICH ARE SUPPOSED TO DENOTE OFFICIAL ELDERS.

There are but two passages upon which there is much reliance placed.

1. In the King's translation, it is written. 'When they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they believed." Ac. 14, 23. The translators intended to construe the language to signify that, Paul and Barnabas made elders for the brethren in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch. But we have shown that, in other places, members of the church grew into the eldership, or became

elders by time and experience in well doing. Men in the denomtnations, profess to constitute, ordain, or make elders, "by fasting, prayer and the imposition of hands," but in the passage under examination, according to the theory, the elders were first ordained, or made, by imposing the hands, afterwards the Apostles prayed with fasting and commended the officers they had madetotheLord." But, we respectfully suggest that, the Greek *Cheirotonee-santees* literally, signifies to, extend the hand or stretch out the hands' but there is no authority to translate the clause, "Ordained for them elders." The word rendered here ordained. is found three times, in the Greek Testament. Paul mentions one, "Who was *chosen* of the churches to travel." 2 Cor, 8, 19. Why was the word not rendered chosen in Ac. 14, 23, instead of ordained? Paul says, "God raised up his son and showed him openly, not to all the people, but to witnesses, *Cheiroto-neemenois* chosen of God." Did God choose, or ordain witnesses by imposing his hands upon their heads, as men are now wont to do? No one thinks so; but how shall we understand the word? It is composed of two words, *cheir*, the hand, and *Toneoo*, to extend, or stretch out. Tropically, it means, to chose, designate or place; but never can it signify to ordain, appoint to office, or induct into any office or positton whatever. Writers, tobesure, have supposed that, the operation might have been by lifting, or extending the hand, as it is said, men voted by holding up the hands. Light may be thrown upon the passage by reference to other scriptures: Paul exhorted Timothy, to "Neglect not the favor, which was given, by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytesy." 1 Tim. 4, 14. Notwithstanding, Prophecy, conferred upon Timothy a gift, right, or privilege, the hands were afterwards imposed, laid upon him, extended, or placed, for some purpose. Paul said, "Extend hands hastily to no one." or "lay hands suddenly on no one." It is plain from these scriptures, that, hands were employed in some manner, and for some purpose, in the direction of special work required. Perhaps, this is a suitable occasion to very briefly call attention to

THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE HANDS IN RELIGIOUS SERVICE.

A full and exhaustive examination of the subject, would require much more space than we can, at present spare; and therefore, we can do little more than express a few of our conclusions ou the subject.

1. In the Old Testament, God swore by lifting his hand in promise. Gen. 14,22.

2. Men swore by putting their hands under the thigh of superiors. Gen. 24, 2; and 47, 29.

3. The people implored the protection of God by lifting their hands. Ex. 17, 11.

4. The people put their hands upon the Levites in token of their submission to them, but not to consecrate them. Nu. 8, 10.

5. Consecration was by Filling the hands. No. 8, 9.

6. The people put their hands upon the head of the sacrifices, to designate them, as suitable for the purposes contemplated.

7, Covenants between individuals, were confirmed, by extending hands to each other. (2 Ki. 10, 15,) or as we say, by "shaking hands."

8. Inferiors submitted to superiors by extending their hands to them. 1 Chron. 29, 24. The extension of the hands was the token of loyalty.

9. The people of God evinced their love and submission to God by "Lifting their hands" towards heaven. Ne. 8, 6.

In the New Testament we often find the hands employed for religious purposes.

1. The ruler said to the Savior, my daughter is dead, but come and "lay thy hands upon her, and she shall live." "The Lord took her by the hand, and she arose." Mat. 9, 18, 25.

2. "Jesus touched the leper, and immediately, he was cleansed." Mat. 8, 3.

3. The Lord "Touched" the hand of the mother of Peters wife, and she arose." Mat. 8, 15.

4. He touched the blind eyes, and they were opened." Mat. 9, 29.

5. The woman touched his garment, and was made whole." 5, 28.

6. They besought the Savior to "put his hand upon the deaf man," "and he put his fingers into his ears, and spit, and touched his tongue, and looking up, said, "Ephatha," and his ears was opened, and he spoke plainly." Mark 8, 31-35.

7. He put his hands upon his eyes, and he was restored." Mar. 8, 25.

We have thus submitted seven instances of "the laying on of hands," or of putting hands upon the afflicted, by One, who un-

derstood the subject; and the idea, in every instance, was that of touch, or the extension of the hand to the party, to the afflicted part of the body. In these instances, we find no meaningless, or merely formal imposition of hands upon the heads of the afflicted. Are we not to understand all cases of laying on hands, by these, that are positively known? Are we told that, the Apostles consecrated the seven at Jerusalem, by laying their hands upon them, after they had prayed. The scriptures do not thus speak. Luke says, "When they had prayed, *Epetheekan autois tas cheiras*, they extended their hands to them. Ac. 6. 6. We apppeal to the scholars of the age for the accuracy of our rendering. The pronoun *autois*, is the dative, and the usual sign is, *to*.

In giving Paul and Barnabas to the work of preaching to the Gentiles, the Elders of Antioch, "When they had fasted and prayed, and extended their hands to them, they sent them away. *Epithentes tas cheiras autois apalusen.* Ac. 3, 5. We most certainly believe this is the best translation of the Greek that can be given, and that, the unprejudiced, will at once admit that, rendering is literal.

We finally submit an example which requires neither translation nor criticism:

"When James, Peter and John, understood the grace of God given to Paul, they gave to him and Barnabas, the right hands of fellowship to go to the Gentiles, but they continued with the circumcision." Gal. 2, 9.

Here is an example of aged and experienced ministers of truth consulting together with regard to the relative delegations of each, and when it was perceived that, Paul possessed eminent qualifications for laboring with the philosophical nations, the five brethren extended to each other "the right hands of fellowship that James, Peter and John should work amongst their countrymen—the Jews; and that Paul and Barnabas, should go to the Gentile lands."

In this instance, we certainly have the only plain case in the Scriptures, of giving the right hands of fellowship, laying on, or extending hands, for the express purpose of performing missionary work in different circumstances. This was co-operation in labor, manifested by affectionately giving their hands to each other.

We think that, we can see a beauty and feel a moral power, in the extension of the hands of our aged and wise brethren, in the divisions of spiritual work, in the salvation of our race.

In conclusion, we challenge scholars, or others, to show from the word of God that, Elders, Preachers, Deacons, or Bishops, were ever made by fasting, prayer, and laying hands on the heads of candidates for office.

With these respectful suggestions, we feel better prepared, to close our remarks in reference to the imaginary making of Elders, by Paul and Barnabas at Antioch in Pissidia. We are reminded that, Horace said, "*Poeta nascitur non fit*"—"A Poet is *born*,not *made*;" and we are as free to assert that, no Elder, was ever made by the manipulations of Church officials. In the very nature of things, youths *grow* into age, young men *grow* into seniors or elders; and every attempt to create, make, appoint or consecrate striplings into elders, is a violation of the simplest rules of language, and an outrage upon the Oracles of God and the laws of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. The idea of making, creating, or even appointing, is not in the Greek word *Toneoo.* Its meanings are to *stretch, extend, draw, tend, relate, designate place* and *refer.* A fair reading of the passage would be, "In extending the hand, they designated, to them, the seniors in each congregation, and praying with fasting, commended them to the Lord into whom they had believed." Acts 14, 23.

It was, and is, the peculiar province of the preacher of the Gospel who plants a church, to place the members in working order. We have an example to the point, in the Apostles placing seven approved brethren in the special and important service of supplying the Grecian widows in the church at Jerusalem. If the seven, were at the time officials, they were not made so by anything which the Apostles did. Their works had proved, who they were, and for what work they were at least well qualified; and when the necessary imformation reached the Apostles, they placed them in the work required, and for which they were qualified.

The second Scripture, usually quoted to prove that ministers are initiated into office, or working position, by a special act, called ordination, (instead of being trained up in the work) in the King's version, reads, "I left thee in Crete that thou shouldst set in order the things wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee." Titus 1, 5.

This translation, with the rendering of Acts 14, 23, suggests the necessity of a brief notice of the word

ORDAIN, OR ORDINATION.

Possibly, with a correct translation of the word of life, we would not have the word *ordain* in the Bible; and if we are not greatly at fault in our information, there is no word in English or Greek, answering to the idea, of commissioning one with perpetual authority to administer sacred rites, as held by the denominations. We take this occasion to introduce to our readers the learned Episcopal critic, G. A. Jacob D.D., who gives in a neat volume, an able production on "Ritualism." He says, "The word "ordain" is used for any kind of appointment, or regulation, being applied indifferently to persons or things. It is given as a translation of no less than twelve Greek words of very different force and meaning, but all implying some kind of causation."

We submit the examples for the examination of the thoughtful:

1. *Gignomai*, "Must one be *ordained* to be a witness," Acts 1, 22,
2. *Graphoo*, Jude 4, "Before of old, *ordained* to this," etc.
3. *Diatassoo*, 1 Cor. 8, 17, "So *ordain* I." Also 1 Cor. 9, 14, Gal. 3, 19.
4. *Etoimazoo*, Eph. 2, 10, "Hath before *ordained*."
5. *Kathisteemi*, Tit. 1, 5, "and *ordain* elders." Also H. 5, 1.
6. *Kataskeuazoo*, H. 9, 6, "These things were thus *ordained*."
7. *Poieoo*, Mar. 3, 14, "He *ordained* twelve," (made—*poieoo*.)
8. *Tassoo*, Ac., 13, 48, "Were *ordained* to eternal life."
9. *Titheemi*, 1 Tim. 3, 7. "I am *ordained* a preacher." Jno. 15, 16.
10. *Krinoo*, Ac. 16, 4, "The decrees that were *ordained*."
11. *Orizoo*, Ac. 17, 31, "Whom he hath *ordained*."
12. *Cheirotoneoo*, Ac. 14, 23, "*ordained* them Elders."

We doubt whether, with all these authorities before us, a Greek scholar can be found, who will say that, any one of these twelve verbs, conveys the idea of investing with office; or that there is a word in the Greek testament which signifies to initiate into authority to perform any religious work. The word employed in Titus 1,5, is *Katasteesees* from *Kathisteemai*, and should be rendered to *arrange* or *place*, but it cannot be correctly translated to *make*. The business of Titus, in Crete, was "to finish the things left incomplete and to wisely arrange the members in every city. It may be said that, "the priests under the Old Testament were made or initiated into office by ordination; and that, ministers in

our day, should be clothed with authority by a similar proceeding. Before the giving of the law, God ordained that "the first born of every family" should act as priest; but afterwards, the Lord said, "The Levites, or sons of Levi, from 30 to 50 years of age, shall go in to do the service of the congregation," Nu. 8, 15 and 3, 3. Thus it is clear that, both before the law and afterwards, the priests were born, and not made priests by ordination. It is true also that, before they engaged in the service, they were washed, purified and properly clothed for the service. Nu. 8, 21. But there is no example of initiation into office in the Old Testament.

In the church of Christ, as we have mentioned, all the saints are priests by birth, and by virtue of their heirship, are fully authorized to offer acceptable sacrifices to God. Their souls, bodies and spirits should be washed, cleansed, and purified before engaging in the service. Under the law, "The whole assembly of the congregation, put their hands upon their priests, or possibly extended their hands to them; and we would be pleased to see all the members of the churches extending their hands to their servants, in engaging in the solemn duties of their calling.

There was a special *charismatos*, grace, or favor, given to Timothy through prophecy, in placing the hands of the presbytery. 1 Tim. 4, 14. This favor, however, was not an office, or in the nature of an investiture. Paul exhorted him to "neglect not this gift," but stir it up, by exercise, to "meditate" upon it, and give himself wholly to the things communicated, that his profiting might appear to all. 1 Tim. 4, 15. This was a blessing bestowed upon Timothy, long after he became a companion of Paul, and all must see it was not to constitute him a preacher. He had acted as Evangelist for years. Paul again exhorted him, "To stir up the gift, or grace, which was in him by his hands," 2. Tim. 1, 6. This blessing, Paul mentions again, in the exhortation, "That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Spirit which dwells in us." 2 Tim. 1, 14. "That good thing *para theekee*, deposit, or trust, Timothy was exhorted to *guard, by the Spirit.*" While we know it was to Timothy, as a grace to be cultivated and improved in blessing others, and dwelt, both in Paul and Timothy, we pretend not to affirm what it was. It was a special grace through prophecy.

We must not omit, to remind the reader that, ten years or more, after Paul and Barnabas had become successful preachers of the gospel, and active planters of churches, they were the oc-

casion of the "fasting, prayers and extension of the hands," of the presbytery at Antioch, before leaving on their new mission, into Asia Minor. No one supposes, that Paul and Barnabas, were *made*, *constituted* or *ordained* preachers by what was done for them at Antioch. It is the duty of those who maintain that, preachers and other officials, were made by prayer, fasting and imposition of hands, in the days of the Apostles, to give a clear example, setting forth the fact, or cease to maintain its divine authority. More upon the subject of ordination, we can scarcely consider necessary at present; and therefore we return to the more direct

HISTORY OF ELDERS.

Many express surprise that, there were elders in the church of Jerusalem, while there is no mention of their appointment, election, or consecration. Paul and Barnabas, with certain others, were sent up from Antioch to Jerusalem, unto the Apostles and Elders about the question of circumcising the Gentile converts. The apostles, Elders and whole multitude came together to consider the matter, and when they understood the law as read by James, it pleased the Apostles and Elders with the whole church to send messengers to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas, bearing the conclusions, at which they had arrived. It is said, "As they went through the cities, they delivered the decrees to keep that, were ordained of the Apostles and Elders." Ac. 15, 1—22 and 16, 4. This narration, brief as it is, affords conclusive evidence that, the Elders were, at least, active and efficient laborers in the congregations. It may be well to add to this example that, when the contributions were sent from Antioch to the starving saints in Judea, they were sent to the Elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. Ac. 11, 30. This, shows that the Elders of the churches, were reliable workers, and to be preferred to all others, in the custody of contributions, and the distribution to the suffering. From this instance, we should learn a valuable lesson, regarding the management of the "fellowship."

We next call special attention to,

THE ELDERS OF EPHESUS.

"From Miletus, Paul called the Elders of Ephesus, and when

they were come," he delivered to them most instructive and im-impressive lessons, regarding the Christian life. He reminded them, of the manner of his life, since forming their acquaintance, and declared that he "Had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God." "Take heed, therefore, to yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Ac. 15, 17, 28.

What are the lessons contained in these exhortations?

1. Paul addresses the Elders as the shepherds of the flock, as the pastors, and feeders of the tender lambs.

2. The Elders are considered, as the overseers, or (*Episkopoi*) *bishops* of the churches.

3. We learn also that, the over-lookers or visitors were to minister to, or feed the church of God.

4. That, the Elders were constituted, placed, ordained or made overseers, or bishops by the Holy spirit. The word is *etheto* from *Titheemi*, to place. As much as to say that, God's spirit *places, designates, points them out,* or makes the seniors, the shepherds of the flock.

These points, we presume, require little, or nothing said, for the purpose of confirmation.

God has made, constituted, ordained and placed the men of age, experience, wisdom and goodness, as the teachers and guardians of the younger members of the family; and of the inexpef rienced and less favored, universally.

If the Elders were the overseers, bishops, shepherds or pastors, in the church of Ephesus, are they not equally Bishops and Shepherds, in other churches? Is not this a divine arrangement? Is not every agency, ordained of God? Does not this view completely overthrow prelacy? episcopacy?—the hierarchy? or a church governmenment, by *men made* officers, as advocated by the denominations of the age?

Furthermore, if the "Holy Spirit made, placed, or ordained these seniors at Ephesus, as the overseers, pastors, or bishops of the church, should we not, "hasten leisurely," in our blind zeal to make officers after the fashion of modern pastors? We are assured that God works through the church as his sole agency.

We are told that this scripture proves that, the Elders and bishops, are identical as to office. It says not a word about office or officers. It simply teaches that, weighty responsibilities, rest

upon the senior members of every congregation—upon the first converts—and that, when they feed the tender lambs of the flock, they are the shepherds or pastors; and when they look over to the straying sheep, they are the overseers, or bishops, just as Paul, was a "Tent-maker, from his avocation.

But we can not notice all the good things, set forth in Paul's address to the venerable brethren, called to hear lessons, for the last time, from his lips.

BISHOPS AND DEACONS AT PHILIPPI.

Paul and Timotheus addressed an epistle, "To all the saints in Christ Jesus, who were at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." Phil. 1, 1. This scripture shows conclusively that, there were bishops and deacons both, in the church at Philippi; and we can see no ground to doubt that, in all worshipping assemblies of Jesus Christ on earth, bishops, and deacons necessarily exist, as God's consecrated leaders and directors in the service.

We must notice what is said

BY TIMOTHY ON THE ELDERSHIP.

Not many months since, a worthy brother asked us, "How we disposed of such passages as, 'If any man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work? We replied that there is no such a passage. While the translators made Paul say, "The office of a bishop," there is no authority in the Greek testament, for any one of the five words—"The"—"office"—"of," a "bishop." Paul in writing to his son said, "If any one desires, (*Episkopees,*) *overseeing*, *overlooking*, or *visiting*, he desires a good work;" but there is not a word in regard to an office or officer. 1 Tim. 3, 1. The word is found but four times in the Sacred Oracles.

1st. It is employed, Lu. 19, 44, with regard to the VISITATION, of the Lord to the Jewish nation.

2nd. It is applied to the *service* of Judas Ac. 1, 20.

3rd. Paul uses the word, as we have quoted, 1 Tim. 3, 1.

4th. Peter exhorted the brethren to "Glorify God, in the day of, VISITATION." 1 Pet. 2, 12.

Episkopee is the noun form of the verb *Episkopeoo—Epi, over, skopeoo, to look*, and the rendering of the verbal noun, conveys

the idea of, *overlooking*, *inspecting*. *overseeing*, or *visiting*. Possibly visiting is the most expressive representation in the English language.

The Apostle further instructed his son that, the "VISITOR, or OVERSEER, must be blameless, a married man, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, not contentious, but patient, mild, liberal. One who rules his house handsomely, having his children in subjection with all gravity. For if a man cannot rule his own house, how can he take care of the church of God? Not a novice, (new convert,) lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." 1 Tim. 3, 1–6.

From the tenth verse, we learn that, the overlookers, were to be proved, faithful, tried, and well-reported, both by the members of the church, and the world without. But how was Timothy to proceed in the performance of the service assigned by Paul? We discover no election—no voting to make officers, either by the church or the visiting evangelists. Again, it is evident, that, no one without trial, could give assurance he was blameless, had a wife, was vigilant, sober, of dignified bearing, hospitable, apt to teach, etc., etc.

But suppose Timothy had found a brother with all these excellent qualities, and was well reported of, by the world, as a mild, companionable and reliable gentleman, what next? The evidence is clear that he has long been teaching, overlooking, etc., and he would certainly be most unsuitable to attempt to make a man what everybody would say he was already. Hence, the idea that Timothy was commissioned to *make* officers—bishops and deacons—in Ephesus, is not in the scriptures, and such a proceeding, would have contradicted the charge, given by Paul. Timothy was not left at Ephesus, to make officers, but to regulate the members who were already in the service. He was to see that, they who desired to perform the service of overlooking or watching after the flock, were fully qualified. Hence, if we look closely at the instruction, we discover that, it was not so much his business to see that there were men laboring as overseers, as to prevent the incompetent from attempting to perform work for which they were not fitted. Paul said, "I besought thee to abide in Ephesus that, thou mightest command some that they teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables, rather than godly edi-

fying. 1 Tim. 1. 3, 4. It evinced great wisdom in Paul to leave his son at Ephesus, to be assured from all the available sources of information in the church, and out of it, that the active members were of the proper character. His chief work, was to counteract the influence of false teachers, and to encourage the saints to perform faithfully the labor committed to their hands. False men, he was to rebuke before all, that others might fear. Finally, when Timothy, should find all co-operating, all fitly joined, and compacted, he was to extend to the saints in every department, the approving hand. This, however, was not to be done hastily. 1 Tim. 5, 22.

THE WORK OF TITUS—THE EVANGELIST.

It is reported in our version of the scriptures that, Paul "Left Titus in Crete to set in order the things wanting and to ordain elders in every city, as he had been appointed." Ti. 1, 5.

The translators of Rome and England, with the settled theory in their minds, that the government of Jesus Christ, is official, prelatical, or episcopal, in a sense not revealed in the Bible, could not well avoid giving a rendering, which would constitute Titus, a maker of officers for the churches. If, however, we were to admit that, Paul left Titus expressly, to ordain, or make officers for the churches, and upon examination of the epistle, we could not discover another word on the subject, would we not have room to doubt the genuineness of the passage? Should not this verse at least conform in meaning to the character of the labor of Titus? When we examine carefully what he really did in the congregations, we can have no doubts as to the varied obligations which Paul placed upon him. Not a word is said about making elders, or officers of any grade.

The Greek word, *Katastesees*, translated to *ordain*, in the passage, literally translated, means, to *place*, *arrange* or *regulate*, and in no passage in the Bible to ordain, in the sense to *make* elders. The truth is that, the attempt to change the meaning of the word *elder*, *older*, or one *more wise* and *experienced* than another, into a suddenly created officer, is a complete subversion of the meaning of a plain Greek and English words. It stultifies all rules of language, all common sense, and converts the scriptures into contradictory and untrustworthy compositions. When our scribes tell us that, "There are official, or technical meanings to the words of

the Bible, differing widely from the letter, and common meanings," they uproot all true grounds of faith, and leave the world in hopeless conjectures, regarding the truth of matters most vital.

Titus, was fully authorized, as we have stated, to properly place, or regulate, the seniors in the congregations. Their work required that, each bishop should be, "Blameless, having a wife, with faithful children, not riotous or unruly." "For," said Paul, "A bishop, (visitor, or overseer,) must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, or given to wine; not hasty, nor devoted to unjust gain, but a lover of hospitality, of good men—sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word, as he had been taught, that he might be able, by sound teaching to convince the gainsayers." These were the main matters after which Titus was to look in the churches. Every one possessing these qualifications was God's chosen and approved worker in the church. The idea of making such elders or bishops is a burlesque on the Christian organization.

The Apostles gave him instructions, as to the characters of pretenders he would have to encounter, and how he was to dispose of them. Said he, "For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially, of the circumcision; whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." "One of their prophets," wrote Paul, "said, The Cretians, are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies."

It was with the view of silencing such teachers that Titus was left in Crete; just as Timothy was left at Ephesus, to look after unsound teachers. Their mission was identical. Paul assured Titus, that, "The evidence was true. Wherefore, [said he,] rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith. They profess that, they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work, reprobate." Titus 1, 5—16.

Just such teachers as Timothy and Titus, are now greatly needed to send into all the churches. We need able and good men, to regulate the leaders, pastors, and unauthorized persons, who are assuming to teach and govern the saints. We need faithful men to "Rebuke" such teachers "sharply," and to "stop their mouths."

For the proper regulation of the teachers, elders and leaders in the churches, Paul gave specific directions as to the character

of teaching for each class. Said he to Titus, "Speak thou, the things, which become sound doctrine." This was not to appoint, or make officers, as is the custom, but his mission was to teach "old men to be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things. That they may teach the young women, to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, home busied, good, obedient to their husbands."

"Young men, likewise, he said, exhort to be sober-minded," and to "show himself a pattern of good works; in doctrine, showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned."

He told him "To exhort servants, to be obedient to their masters, and to please them in all things," Titus 2, 1—10.

Finally, he was to "Put the saints in mind, to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to avoid foolish questions, contentions and strivings about the law." The very last item, was "To learn to maintain good works, for necessary uses, that they may not be found unfruitful." Titus, 3rd chapter.

We have not discovered the slightest allusion to "making elders" or officers, but we have found ample instructions, in regard to regulating elders, male and female, young women, young men, and also servants, and all the members of the spiritual family.

We deem it proper also to notice, the oft-repeated statement amongst writers, that "Elders and bishops, according to Paul to Titus, are identical as to office." There is not, we repeat, a word written in the Bible about the office of either Elders or Bishops. We doubt not every "visitor," overseer or bishop, was an elder, but not every elder was capable of overseeing, or looking after the sheep. Every Judge, is a lawyer; but every lawyer is not necessarily a Judge. Some might be both seniors, or elders, and overlookers, but not all elders are able to teach or watch the flock. We have known men, who were lawyers, preachers, farmers, and school-masters, but it would betray sad deficiency of plain common sense, to affirm from this fact, that all lawyers, are preachers, farmers and school-managers.

But for the present, we must close our examination of the Eldership, by submitting a few most obvious conclusions.

1. The Elders in the churches, were the first-fruits or converts in the congregation, or the older, wiser and more experienced members. From these qualifications, they were the legitimate teachers and pastors.

2. The obligation rested upon them, to feed the flock of God, willingly, not for gain, but as the stewards of God, whose work was clearly pointed out.

3. The Holy Spirit, made or designated the Elders, the overseers, or bishops, in all the congregations of the saints. They were also the pastors, as we have seen, or shepherds of the sheep.

4. The members of the churches were to consider the seniors, as the first-fruits every where, and to submit, especially, to such as ministered to the saints, hoped and believed in the Lord. 1 Cor. 16, 15.

5. The intimations, in our version of the New Testament, in regard to *making* elders or bishops in the churches, by elections and ordinations, are unauthorized and should not be tolerated by the people of God.

6. The mission of Timothy and Titus, was to regulate the various classes, in order that, all might grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth.

7. The theory, of parties, which sustains the Hierarchy—Prelacy, Episcopy, or church government by officers especially ordained by men for the work, affords most conclusive evidence of the great apostacy from the simplicity and spirituality of the Divine volume.

THE LORD'S DAY EVENING.

On this evening, when the doors were shut, for fear of the Jews, the disciples of Jesus were assembled together. A great excitement had roused them from their depression, on account of the death of their Lord. The doors of their room were fastened and we can see them talking eagerly over the occurrences of the day. They had seen their Lord crucified and laid in the tomb. That morning, the body was missing, and while they were wondering and in great distress, he suddenly stood by them with a cheering, "All Hail." The whole day was no doubt, one of mingled emotions. Joy, gratitude and love, filled their hearts. At night in their closed room, they had met to tell their experiences, and surely, they had experiences worth telling. The women were

earliest at the grave and were honored with his first appearing. They could say, "We held him by his feet," for fear he might escape from us. We saw a glorious angel who kindly spoke to us, told us not to be afraid. They felt very joyful they had been so favored and took the greatest pleasure in telling what had occured to them. Womanlike, we would suppose, they told it over and over again, to all who would listen. No one seemed to remember he had spoken of rising from the dead, and there was as much astonishment as if the ideas had been altogether new. While discussing these things, One of lovely and majestic presence stood in their midst and all were terrified and affrighted thinking they saw a spirit. "Peace be unto you," was his first expression of love." Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

Look at my hands and my feet—that it is I, myself. Handle me and see. A spirit has not flesh and bones as you see me have." He reached to them the hands, through which the nails had been crushed, and the feet still telling of the agony he had endured How glad the disciples were when they saw the Lord, we can imagine, but not express. We would think, "My Lord and My God," bursts from the hearts of more than one, who had doubted—had thought the words of the women, "only idle tales." The disciples little expected so joyful a close to a day opening in deep sadness. Before going to the tomb, on the morning, "while it was yet dark," they supposed their Lord, a lifeless corpse in its gloomy precincts. They had followed him for years, but now, their hopes were buried with him and they mourned and wept. At night, he stood in their midst and they were rejoicing around him. They thanked the Father who had begotten them again to a lively hope through his resurrection from the dead. He again stood among his disciples—full of love and tender care for their welfare. It is well to remember he came to them, when they were thinking and talking of him—shewing the truth of his declaration. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

On this Evening, we learn of his taking pains to remove the doubts of one of his disciples, who was not at all prominent among them, except for his unbelief and of whom we do not hear again. At this time, he pronounced a blessing on those who should believe on his name without having seen him. The evening of the Lords day as well as the morning, should be sacred to his

WHEN WAS PETER CONVERTED?

A QUESTION BY L. P. SIMER, *of Towash, Texas.*

The Apostle Peter, in the great confusion of his Master's betrayal, insults and suffering, for the moment, faltered in his confidence, and fell from his steadfastness. He had desired to know who should be the greatest in the kingdom of the Savior, and was answered that, they "who had continued with him in his temptations, should sit upon thrones, in the kingdom, judging the tribes of Israel." The Lord, however, understanding well the frailties, and sore trials before his servant, "Said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art *converted*, strengthen thy brethren." Luke 22, 28—32.

When Peter denied his Lord, "Jesus turned and looked upon him, and he remembered the words of the Lord, how he had said unto him, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice; and he went out, and wept bitterly." Lu. 22, 61, 62.

It was at this juncture of time—at the moment, he remembered the words of the Savior, his heart was overwhelmed with the bitterest anguish, he came to himself—he lamented his great error, and was soundly converted. Then, it was, he was enabled to strengthen his brethren. Peter's bitter mortification, at this "sifting" of Satan, was ever present with him, to his martyrdom; which, Origin reports, he endured at Rome, under Nero, by his own request, with his head downwards.

WHAT WE NEED.

RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE.

The churches, every where, are in need of much more general and accurate knowledge of the Bible.

"LIVE MEN," WIDE AWAKE CHRISTIANS.

We, especially, need, "*live men* and *women*," in all the congregations of the saints. We need whole communities, of active, self-sacrificing, humble, loving, worshipping members.

EXHORTERS.

We need exhorters—men who can read, pray and encourage their brethren. We need religious women.—Mothers in Israel, such as can teach the young women to be devoted to God.

memory. Should not his friends set it apart for thinking of his love, for talking of his goodness. Should they not especially remember what he did for them and what he requires in return, Should they not teach the young—that this morning—this evening is indeed the Lord's—that they should spend the time reverently in his fear. They should know that the Savior, "Who had been walking among men, partaking of their infirmities, leaning on their bosoms, weeping over their graves, bleeding on the cross," this day, arose from the tomb—ascended to heaven and brought life and immortality to all the frail children of earth. May old and young learn to love the evening of a day fraught with so many sacred memories.

C. F.

TO THE GIRLS.

"There is not sufficient earnestness among young people. We need earnest christians who try to lead every day lives devoted to God. If girls would begin at an early age to deny themselves—if they wonld declare themselves the followers of Christ, and would strive to follow his footsteps, there would be many noble, earnest women in our land.

Can we doubt that God intended us to live earnest, working lives when we view the life of our Savior? Can we hear him pray in Gethsemane, or see him hanging on the cross with his bleeding wounds without feeling that life is earnest?—that should devote much of our lives to him who gave his whole life for us? Do not be afraid of being called eccentric or over religious. Have a well defined christian aim and work constantly to carry it out. Strive to enter in at the strait gate for many, I say unto you, there be, that shall seek to enter therein, and shall not be able."

A young girl who is trying to be useful, gives these words of admonition. May they sink deep into the hearts of those for whom they were written.

C. F.

GOOD SINGING.

We very much need, good singers, in every community. All should be taught to sing. All persons who can talk, ought to sing; and can sing, if they had faith, as a grain of mustard seed. We need Bible class congregations, and prayerful people in every neighborhood.

LIBRARIES AND TRAINING FACILITIES.

We need *Libraries*, and means in all sections, to make thorough and critical scholars. If we would take the matter to heart, we might build up, in every city, at least, an organization capable of affording the soundest and highest Educational advantages to all who have a desire to improve. We especially need such advantages in our own city, and indeed, in all cities, and sections, where Christians reside.

WHAT WE WOULD LIKE.

RELIGIOUS REPORTS.

Had we space, we would be greatly rejoiced, to give our readers full monthly reports of church news. In many parts of our country, our Evangelists, have worked almost wonders, the present year. Men and women, have turned to the Lord by scores and hundreds. We assure our fellow-laborers, that, our heart is with them, and if efforts, are as earnestly made in the twelve months to come, as have been, in the past year, very great conquests may be anticipated. Let the teachers abstain from all human devices, to reach the people, and cleave to Jesus, and his ways, and all will be well.

PERSONAL CULTURE OF THE SAINTS.

We would be much more than pleased, if we could travel amongst the people of God, and encourage them in the work of redemption. We would, indeed, be exceedingly happy, if we could have the *personal* encouragement of our brethren scattered abroad. We wish to see and talk with the preachers, and particularly with the young preachers, and with all who love the truth.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.

We would take very great interest in the education of our country-men, if we could see a way open. But in the States south, since the "war" especially, amongst the disciples, very little interest has been manifested with reference to schools and colleges for the training of our youth. This state of affairs should be deeply regretted.

DIED, at Wetumpka, on the 28th of September, Sister M. J. KYLE, daughter of Bro. James and Sister M. J. Metcalfe, and wife of Col. Osceola Kyle. In the bloom of youth, with a devoted husband, a little sweet daughter, our sister had much to render life bright and beautiful, She was active and useful, beloved by a large circle of friends, and none but those who have lost the tenderest and most affectionate children, can tell how her mother, (who before her death) had borne the deepest affliction, mourns her gifted child. We yield her to the Father who doeth all things well, with the prayer that she may be among those whom the Savior will at last gather as his jewels.

You have left desolate hearts, my dear young sister, but the thought of their agony distnrbs not your quiet rest. The light has gone from your pleasant home. The voice of sweet music is no more heard in its silent chambers, and the little babe weeps for its buried mother. Prayers ascend for the bereaved. Oh! Father in heaven, look, in pity, on the sorrowing children of earth.

C. F.

SECRET SOCIETIES.

Quite a number of our friends, have recently requested us, to give our views upon the advantages and disadvantages of *secret associations;* but there are many reasons which have operated to prevent us from doing so.

While there may be good arguments in favor of secret organic labor, it would not be fair to give them to the public, without the negative side at the same time.

The subject, again, is of such a character as to make men quite sensitve when opposed, and we desire no controversy which will not result with advantage to all concerned.

Hence, we consider it best, in the circumstancees, to attempt no discussion at present of the questions involved; but if any competent writer will engage to discuss the positive side of the question, we offer a page or two monthly in the HISTORIAN, for this purpose, reserving the right to determine how far it may be necessary to show arguments for the negative.

We have never been a member of a secret organization, political, moral, religious or agricultural, and our decided conviction is,

that the evil greatly preponderates over the good, in all secret orders; but *moderation* shall be our motto. There is more involved in the question than most persons are aware of, and hence, the necessity of examining it in all its bearing.

SUCCESS IN OUR EFFORTS.

While we have diligently labored to afford our readers scriptural conclusions on all subjects discussed, we are painfully conscious, the embarrassments which have crowded our path-way, have so materially interfered as to prevent us from doing very little more, than to merely call attention to some of the most important subjects introduced. Even the elements of religion, we have but very imperfectly examined. In the present confused state of society, the plainest scriptural statements, can scarcely be satisfactory, till the true *status* of *denominationalism*, is better understood. Does the view, of "*The Protestant Alliance*," recently assembled in New York, which assumes that Christian union consists in sects mutually acknowledging each other's orthodoxy, satisfy earnest enquirers after truth? We have endeavored to show that God's family is one, and is independant of all parties and sects; that the *unity* of the body of Christ, consists in the hearty adoption of the, "One faith, One Lord, One immersion, One church, One name, One spirit, One hope, and One God and Father of all.

While we are confident that, we have worked in the proper direction, experience has taught us, that serious obstructions still exist, and we humbly seek the friendly co-operation and assistance of all our Father's children. We would decidedly prefer that, our contemporaries, would openly oppose us, than to take refuge in sullen silence. Say, brethren, where are you?